

I welcomed into this world Virginia Parker Etheridge, the new daughter of our son Brian Etheridge and his wife Meredith. Virginia arrived at 8:40 p.m. in Raleigh, NC. She weighed 6 pounds and 15 ounces and measured 20 inches.

Faye and I are truly blessed today by the arrival of Virginia Parker Etheridge. The birth of a new child is a joyous occasion that reminds us of the promise of a new life. I hope that Virginia will live in a world that is even better than the one we live in today. I hope that she will have access to the best education and technology in the world, that she will breathe fresh air and drink clean water, that her streets will be safe, and that her generation will not be burdened by the debt of the previous generation.

A new child in the family is a gift from God. The Etheridge family and I look forward to spending time with our new bundle of joy and introducing her to all of our friends and neighbors in North Carolina's Second Congressional District.

HONORING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE WOLVERINE MARCHING BAND

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 3, 2005

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the outstanding achievements of LaVergne High School's Wolverine Marching Band.

In September, the band marched in the LaVergne Old Timers' Day Parade. I was also a participant in the parade, and I was impressed by the talent and precision of the young musicians. Their many hours of practice had culminated in a flawless performance.

It is not just the students and teachers who make the Wolverine Marching Band great. The parents of these students also play a significant role. In addition to providing financial support, the parents often pitch in to transport band equipment to competitions and football games.

This season, the band has been awarded numerous accolades, including First Place Band Overall and First Place Percussion Overall at the Phoenix Classic Invitational. Other honors include two Color Guard, Band, and Percussion Superior Ratings and two First Place Field Commanders awards.

Residents of LaVergne, Tennessee, can be proud of their Wolverine Marching Band. I applaud the students, parents and teachers for their hard work and dedication.

TRIBUTE TO MRS. SHIRLEY MCINTYRE OF DORCHESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

HON. STEPHEN F. LYNCH

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 3, 2005

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a friend and constituent from the 9th Congressional District of Massachusetts, Mrs. Shirley McIntyre, who passed away on Friday September 23, 2005. Born Shirley Powers,

she was formerly a South Boston resident before moving to the neighboring town of Dorchester. In 1956, Shirley married George McIntyre, her beloved husband of 49 years and they had five beautiful children: Darlene, Daniel, Shirley, Vanessa, and the late William.

Shirley was a devoted mother and grandmother who nurtured and guided her family as well as many of the children in her neighborhood and local community. She was a dedicated wife who spent her time with her children and beloved husband George, a retired Local 7 Iron worker who loved Shirley with all his heart.

Mr. Speaker, Shirley McIntyre will be fondly remembered not only by her family, which includes eight grandchildren, three great grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews; but also by the many friends who were touched by her kindness and unconditional love.

On a personal note, throughout my tenure in public service both as a member of the Massachusetts State House and in the United States Congress, I have had the unique opportunity and pleasure to see first hand Shirley's commitment to her family and community. Shirley's willingness to be involved with her neighborhood and local political process is a testament to her endless devotion to family and friends.

Today, I ask the Membership of the House of Representatives to join with me in offering our deepest condolences to the McIntyre family for their loss. We will all miss Shirley as a shining example to her family and community.

MEMORIAL TRIBUTE TO SGT. ARTHUR A. MORA, JR.

HON. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 3, 2005

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, it is with deepest sympathy that I pay a special tribute to my constituent Sgt. Arthur A. Mora, Jr., who was killed in Balad, Iraq on October 19 when his vehicle was hit by enemy fire. His passing at the age of 23, marks the end of a young and promising life which had already exemplified duty, honor and heroism.

Arthur will be remembered as the quiet student at El Rancho High School in Pico Rivera who missed having his photo taken for the senior yearbook. After graduation, he enlisted in the U.S. Army on July 27, 2000. Upon completion of basic training, Arthur was assigned to the 1st Battalion, the 3rd Air Defense Artillery, and the 3rd Infantry Division followed by Bravo Battery 5th Air Defense Artillery Regiment at Camp Pelham, Korea. He returned to the 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry at Fort Stewart, Georgia. In July 2005, Sgt. Mora was deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Sgt. Mora's awards include the Bronze Star Medal, the Purple Heart, the Combat Action Badge, the Good Conduct Medal, the Army Achievement Medal, the Army Commendation Medal, the National Defense Ribbon, the Army Service Medal, and the Korean Defense Service Medal.

Family members say they draw comfort in knowing that Arthur was doing what he wanted. He was a young man who loved the military and would have most likely made a career in the Army.

Arthur is survived by his wife Veronica, daughters Olivia, Celina and a newborn son, Christopher, whom he had never seen. He is also survived by his mother Sylvia Mora of Montebello, sisters Michelle, Celia, and his brother Paul.

His family and friends will miss this caring young man greatly, and to them I extend my sincerest heartfelt sympathy and pray that they will receive God's comforting graces in their time of sorrow.

DEMOCRATIZATION IN INDONESIA: A NEW ERA

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 3, 2005

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, over the last several years, Indonesia has entered a new era of democracy. At the national level, the Indonesian people voted freely in an open and fair 2004 Presidential election for the first time in that country's history. The election campaign was vigorous, with public debates and ample discussion of issues among the main candidates. There was no significant violence or attempts at voter intimidation. International election observers as well as domestic monitors reported that the election in Indonesia was conducted fairly. Voter turnout in the general election was very high, about 80 percent.

More recently, another major step forward in democracy is taking place in Indonesia. Regional and local elections have recently been held throughout this vast country of more than 17,000 islands. As before, in last year's presidential election, some observers predicted that local elections would lead to communal conflict. But they were wrong. Nationwide local elections conducted in June went off smoothly although there were tensions among ethnic and religious groups in a few districts. But the security forces maintained order and enforced fair elections. I am informed that of 166 regional districts, 116 succeeded in conducting orderly local elections. Although sporadic, minimal violence did occur in about 16 districts, it was brief and quickly controlled by the police. As in the presidential election last year, according to reports I have seen, voter participation in the local elections was very high, nearly 74 percent.

Indonesian officials recognized openly that there are some weaknesses to be fixed. One is the difficulty in quickly counting the votes in some districts. This case could and did give rise to allegations made by losing candidates, charging that the election was unfair and manipulated. The government intends to work with district officials to improve election procedures, especially voter tallies.

In West Papua there appears to have been no violence or conflicts during the local elections. Reports indicated that elections were successfully held in 14 districts in West Papua. People came out to vote for their candidates to regional councils and exercised their right to choose the local leaders they prefer. Regarding elections for a regional governor, I am told the West Papuans are waiting for the establishment of the People's Council of Papua before conducting the election. This council will be the highest representative body

of West Papua and will have authority to select the candidates for governor of Papua. But, even while awaiting the establishment of the council, the process to nominate some candidates to be governor of Papua is proceeding. I am informed that the Special Commission of the District Parliament of Papua is developing preparations for elections for regional governor. When those preparations are completed, the Commission will send a list of candidates to the People's Council of Papua to be selected to participate in the election.

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the government and people of Indonesia for this new and highly important step in instituting democracy in this great country. Regardless of the difficulties encountered in conducting local elections throughout this vast nation, the Administration of President Yudhoyono and the regional authorities demonstrated determination to follow the path to democracy. Just as important, the Indonesian people responded by coming out to the polls in huge numbers. Indonesia deserves high praise for its remarkable accomplishments in breaking with a legacy of dictatorship, and ethnic and religious strife, to successfully implement democratic principles.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 3, 2005

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I was not present for two votes on November 1, 2005. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows:

Rollcall No. 557: H.R. 3548—Heinz Ahlmeyer, Jr. Post Office Building Designation Act—I would have voted “yes.”

Rollcall No. 558: H.R. 3989—Albert Harold Quie Post Office Designation Act—I would have voted “yes.”

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BOB ETHERIDGE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 3, 2005

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to explain my absence during yesterday's recorded votes. As a proud grandfather, it is with exceeding pride that I announce the birth yesterday of my first granddaughter to my son Brian and my daughter-in-law Meredith. My wife, Faye, and I joyfully welcome this new baby girl who joins her cousin William Otto, who was born to our daughter Catherine and our son-in-law Tim Otto in January. This is a special time for the Etheridge family, and we are truly blessed.

Had I been present in the Chamber yesterday, I would have voted “No” on rollcall 559 and “Yes” on rollcalls 560 and 561. Rollcall 560 was passage of H.R. 4061, Department of Veterans Affairs Information Technology Improvement Act, a bipartisan and noncontroversial measure. Likewise, rollcall 561 was passage of H.R. 1691, the John H. Bradley Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic Designation Act, a routine matter.

However, rollcall 559 was passage of H.R. 1606, the so-called Online Freedom of Speech Act. This substantive legislation would undo Federal regulation of soft money for political communication on the Internet. Consideration of such substantive legislation on the Suspension Calendar, which affords no opportunity for amendment and severely restricts debate, is an improper and ill-advised method to craft sound public policy. I would have voted “No” on rollcall 559 in favor of its consideration under regular order.

RECOGNIZING THE COMMUNITY OF RAMONA, KS

HON. JERRY MORAN

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 3, 2005

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ramona, KS, for successful community revitalization efforts.

Pat Wick and Jessica Gilbert have always considered this town of 100 people to be home. It is where their parents were born and raised. As children, these sisters would accompany their parents on annual visits from their home in California to help their grandparents with summer harvest. As adults, Pat worked as a clinical psychologist and Jessica was a philanthropic organization consultant.

When they returned to Ramona in 1989 for a family reunion, the sisters felt a strong pull to come home. They reestablished their roots building by building. In 1990, Pat purchased and the sisters renovated a home they now call The Ramona House, in honor of their ancestors. Pat and Jessica purchased a second house in 1995 and remade it into Cousin's Corner bed and breakfast. The sisters purchased a third home that is now a lodge called Jake's Place. All of this was accomplished through frequent visits to Ramona, even while Pat and Jessica continued their careers in California.

By the year 2000, Pat and Jessica decided to take the final step and moved home. The sisters now live in the Ramona House and operate Jake's Place and Cousin's Corner. More recently, they purchased the old bank building and turned it into The Dirt Gamblers Museum, which is home to photographs and other items honoring Ramona's pioneer history. The sisters have also contributed to the revitalization of Ramona through extensive community involvement. They have helped organize several civic and community events, including a spring tea party, a citywide Memorial Day service, a Main Street Fourth of July parade and an outdoor Nativity in the city park complete with live animals and singing angels. In an effort to celebrate Halloween and promote regional tourism, Pat and Jessica are currently helping promote a Scarecrow parade in Ramona and several other area communities. If all of that isn't enough, Pat is the town's mayor and Jessica is the city clerk.

At age 93, Tony Meyer is Ramona's oldest citizen. He believes Pat and Jessica are doing great things for the community. “The sisters have awakened this town again,” Meyer said. Warren Fike, a lifetime resident, also notices a positive change. “Having the sisters come in has helped keep Ramona alive,” Fike said. “The steps they've taken to improve the town

have motivated more people here to help, too.”

The sisters believe Ramona's revitalization is beginning to take hold. “We're romantics, and we have a passion for this place,” Jessica said. “We want people to be proud they're connected to the town and want them to invest in it again.” “It's a special place,” Pat noted. “It's Mayberry R.F.D. come to life.”

For rural communities to survive and prosper into the future, citizens must be willing to create their own opportunities for success. Ongoing efforts to revitalize Ramona are an example of how hard work, vision and community support can create just such an opportunity. Citizens throughout Kansas are working together to enhance the quality of life in their communities. Ramona is a success story that demonstrates how teamwork and creative thinking can make a positive difference in rural America.

TRIBUTE TO PAUL HILLEGONDS

HON. FRED UPTON

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 3, 2005

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Paul Hillegonds, an individual who has served the residents of Michigan through the years with great distinction. Throughout his career in public service, Paul tirelessly worked for the betterment of our great State and continues to impact countless individuals through his professional and community affiliations.

Paul served in the Michigan House of Representatives from 1979 to 1996, and was speaker his final two years in elected office. In 1997, Paul embarked on a new path of service, taking the reins as president of Detroit Renaissance, a non-profit, civic organization comprising Southeast Michigan's business leaders.

Paul has received numerous honors throughout his distinguished career, and I am pleased to call him a friend. Paul and I go back a long way—all the way back, in fact, to when he was Administrative Assistant for U.S. Representative Ruppe and I was a staffer for Representative Dave Stockman.

Our friendship has only strengthened over time. His wife and kids are good family friends and we have enjoyed each other both in and out of public service. Paul has always stood for the right things and he has displayed the utmost integrity. Unfortunately term limits cost us his leadership as speaker of the Michigan House, but his leadership for the folks of Michigan continues.

I look forward to many more years of Paul's friendship. We are all better off for Paul's service to the State of Michigan, and I wish him continued success.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. HENRY J. HYDE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 3, 2005

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, on November 1 and 2, 2005, I was absent for several votes for